

(b) Remarks:

The claims are 16-21, with claim 16 being independent. Claim 16 has been amended to better define the intended invention. Reconsideration of the claims is requested.

Claims 16-21 were rejected in the outstanding final action as obvious over Chou '580 in view of Tamayoshi '785. The Examiner admits Chou '580 explicitly fails to disclose anodizing the substrate by immersion in an anodization solution or that the substrate is of a material soluble during anodization. Tamayoshi '785 is said to disclose that which is missing in Chou. The Examiner notes that the claims do not explicitly recite that it is not necessary to remove the remaining film existing in the depression of the patterning layer by a separate etching step nor do the claims exclude a separate etching step. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Prior to addressing the rejection applicants wish to briefly review certain key features and advantages of the present claimed invention. The present invention employs a patterning layer of a material soluble during anodization in which holes are formed when dissolved by the anodization solution. In the present invention, it is not necessary to remove the remaining film existing in the depression of the patterning layer by a separate step as by etching, which feature simplifies the process of hole formation. See Example 7.

Chou teaches use of a reactive ion etching or chemical etching to form recesses in the substrate. The present invention avoids a separate etching step to form holes.

Tamayoshi merely discloses forming holes by anodization. However, Tamayoshi fails to disclose using a patterning layer comprised of a soluble material to reduce the steps in forming holes.

It would have not been obvious for those skilled in the art to combine Chou having no specific disclosure of forming holes by anodization, but employing etching, with Tamayoshi, directed to a technique of forming holes by anodization.

Even when combined, the concept of using a patterning layer of a soluble material to reduce the steps, such as etching, would be unappreciated.

The claims should be allowed and the case passed to issue.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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